

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SNM-05 CIAE-00 INR-05 NSC-05
NSAE-00 H-01 L-01 IO-13 OES-02 /055 W
-----036188 300755Z /23

P R 281530Z MAR 78
FM USMISSION USBERLIN
TO AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG

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LIMDIS

E.O.11652:NA
TAGS: SANR, WB
SUBJECT: BERLIN NARCOTICS PROBLEM: DEA TASK FORCE

BEGIN SUMMARY: WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE US-BERLIN TASK
FORCE APPROACH TRIED HERE, WHICH WE UNDERSTAND DEA WISHES
TO DO IN THE NEAR FUTURE. THIS MESSAGE EMPHASIZES THE
IMPORTANCE OF LINING UP MAXIMUM SUPPORT BEFOREHAND, AND
REQUESTS EARLY CONCURRENCE IN OUR WRITING THE SENATOR FOR
INTERIOR ON BEHALF OF THIS UNDERTAKING. THE PROPOSED TEXT
OF A LETTER IS BEING SENT PRIORITY SEPTTEL FOR YOUR COMMENTS
AND APPROVAL. WE FEEL THAT A TASK FORCE VISIT UNDER THESE
CONDITIONS CAN PROVIDE A MOST USEFUL STEP. WE ARE LESS
SANGUINE THAT IT WILL OBVIATE THE NEED OVER THE LONGER RUN
TO ASSIGN A DEA AGENT HERE. END SUMMARY.

1. WE ALSO BELIEVE THE TIME IS RIPE TO TRY THE MIXED TASK
FORCE APPROACH IN BERLIN. THE EXPANDED BERLIN NARCOTICS
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SQUAD IS GAINING EXPERIENCE AND THERE ARE SOME HOPEFUL
SIGNS THAT, FOR WHATEVER REASONS, THE NARCOTICS PROBLEM
MAY BE STABILIZING. HEROIN SEIZED THUS FAR IN 1978 (7 KILOS)
BY POLICE AND CUSTOMS IS ALREADY TWICE THE AMOUNT SEIZED
DURING ALL OF 1977. OVERDOSE DEATHS AT THIS POINT ARE
RUNNING BEHIND LAST YEAR'S RATE. DEA AGENT VISITS,
ESPECIALLY FROM HAMBURG, HAVE ABLY DEMONSTRATED THE VALUE OF

US ASSISTANCE AT THE EXPERT LEVEL, AND THE STAGE SEEMS SET TO MORE.

2. THERE IS ONE NOTE OF CAUTION, HOWEVER. THE EXPERIENCE OF THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS OF INTENSIFIED BERLIN-DEA COOPERATION ON SPECIFIC CASES HAS SHOWN UP THE EXPECTED INITIAL DIFFICULTIES. SKILLED IN OTHER AREAS, THE BERLIN POLICE HAVE MUCH TO LEARN ABOUT DRUG CONSPIRACY WORK - MORE THAN THEY THEMSELVES YET REALIZE. ALSO, BERLIN PRIDE IS AT LEAST AS RESISTANT AS THAT OF ANY OTHER CITY'S TO OUTSIDE SUGGESTIONS. THE OPERATING LEVEL OF THE POLICE HAS BEEN SLOW TO OPEN ITSELF FULLY TO DEA, DESPITE GOOD INTENTIONS.

3. THE NEXT PHASE IN US-BERLIN NARCOTICS COLLABORATION IS THEREFORE IMPORTANT AND DELICATE. IN OUR VIEW, NURTURING A CONTINUING CLOSE AND OPEN WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE POLICE AND US NARCOTICS SPECIALISTS STILL REQUIRES CONSIDERABLE SPADEWORK HERE ON THE SPOT. WE CONTINUE TO FEEL THIS CAN BEST BE DONE THROUGH ASSIGNMENT OF A FULLTIME AGENT TO BERLIN, ALTHOUGH WE TOO HOPE FOR IMPORTANT GAINS THROUGH THE TASK FORCE ACTION.

4. THE US-BERLIN MIXED TASK FORCE OR TEAM CONCEPT NOW UNDER CONSIDERATION BY DEA CAN PROVIDE A USEFUL AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POSSIBLY DRAMATIC STEP IN THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING MORE EFFECTIVE ANTI-NARCOTICS METHODS AND MEASURES IN BERLIN. WE FULLY SHARE THE VIEW THAT AN APPROACH AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL IS ESSENTIAL TO SHOW US INTEREST AND ENCOURAGE MAXIMUM BERLIN COOPERATION. A LETTER TO THE SENATOR FOR INTERIOR (THE PRIMARY POLITICAL OFFICIAL WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUPPLY REDUCTION EFFORTS) FROM THE US MISSION (WHICH WITH THE BRITISH AND FRENCH MISSIONS EXERCISES CONTROL OVER THE POLICE IN THE WESTERN SECTORS OF BERLIN) SEEMS TO US THE APPROPRIATE INITIAL CHANNEL.

5. THIS LETTER WOULD OUTLINE THE MIXED TASK FORCE CONCEPT (NOTING THAT THE POLICE MEMBER WOULD BE THE LEADER), AND REQUEST FULL SUPPORT FOR THIS JOINT ENDEAVOR. IT WOULD BE FOLLOWED BY DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN INTERIOR/POLICE REPRESENTATIVES, WITH DEA PARTICIPATION, AND SIMILAR MEETINGS WITH THE FINANCE OFFICE (FOR CUSTOMS) AND THE OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTOR. PRACTICAL MODALITIES WOULD THEN BE WORKED OUT BY DEA IN DIRECT CONTACT WITH POLICE AND CUSTOMS, AND OPERATING LEVEL OFFICIALS OF OTHER PARTICIPATING AGENCIES.

6. WE ARE SENDING VIA SEPTTEL TO EMBASSY BONN FOR COMMENTS AND CONCURRENCE A PROPOSED TEXT OF OUR LETTER TO THE SENATOR FOR INTERIOR. BEFORE DELIVERING IT WE WOULD NEED TO KNOW: A) WHEN A DEA REPRESENTATIVE COULD BE AVAILABLE TO COME TO BERLIN FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH BERLIN OFFICIALS; AND B) WHEN DEA TEAM PARTICIPANTS WOULD BE AVAILABLE, ONCE THE PROJECT HAS APPROVAL AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL.

7. USCOB CONCURS. DAVIS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NARCOTICS, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978USBERL00698
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780137-1098
Format: TEL
From: USBERLIN
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780316/aaaaanoy.tel
Line Count: 126
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: e12cfebb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3177214
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BERLIN NARCOTICS PROBLEM: DEA TASK FORCE BEGIN SUMMARY: WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE US-BERLIN TASK FORCE APPROACH TRIED HERE, WHICH WE UNDERSTAND DEA
TAGS: SNAR, WB
To: BONN
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e12cfebb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014